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From: Jenkins, Laura Flynn
Sent: Wed 9/7/2016 6:24:10 PM
Subject: FW: NPL Media Clips, 9/7

For situational awareness

Laura Jenkins

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From: StClair, Christie

Sent: Wednesday, September 07, 2016 12:21 PM

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Below: Denver Post, Times Union, Flathead Beacon, Silverton Standard

Denver Post

<http://www.denverpost.com/2016/09/07/gold-king-animas-mining-sites-disaster-declaration/>

EPA declares Gold King, 35 Animas mining sites disasters for Superfund

By Bruce Finley 9/7/16 2:03pm

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Wednesday took a key step toward cleanup at the Gold King Mine and 35 other sites in southwestern Colorado, putting them on the National Priorities List for Superfund cleanup.

EPA officials said they'll announce the prioritization of these sites along Animas River headwaters above Silverton – “the Bonita Peak Mining District” – in the federal register on Friday. These are among 10 new sites nationwide targeted for cleanups — dependent on Congress providing funds. The federal Superfund program involves investigating and cleaning up the nation's worst environmental disasters to protect human health and the environment.

“Listing the Bonita Peak Mining District on the National Priorities List is an important step that enables EPA to secure the necessary resources to investigate and address contamination concerns of San Juan and La Plata Counties, as well as other downstream communities in New Mexico, Utah, and the Navajo Nation,” EPA regional administrator Shaun McGrath said in a prepared statement.

“We look forward to continuing our efforts with the state of Colorado, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S Forest Service, tribal governments and our community partners to address the impacts of acid mine drainage on the Animas River.”

The formal designation had been expected, and preliminary work at the Gold King has begun. An EPA-run crew in August 2015, assessing how to open the Gold King as acid metals wastewater built up inside, accidentally triggered a 3 million-gallon blowout that turned the Animas River mustard-yellow through three states.

EPA officials on April 7 proposed adding the Bonita district to the priorities list and began a period for public comment.

The district consists of 35 dormant mines, seven tunnels, four heaps of tailings and two study areas — sites located along Mineral Creek, Cement Creek and the Upper Animas. These waterways flow into the Animas River just below Silverton.

Mining in the area began in the 1860s, and water quality has been impaired for decades. Colorado officials designated some portions of the Animas River, below Cement Creek, officially impaired after 1998 due to toxic heavy metals including lead, iron and aluminum.

EPA data on 32 sources in the area, discharging contaminants at a combined rate of 5.4 million gallons per day, identify contaminants including cadmium, copper, manganese and zinc.

“Listing the Bonita Peak Mining District is critical to addressing historic mining impacts in San Juan County and our downstream communities,” Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment director of environmental programs Martha Rudolph said in a statement issued by EPA officials as part of their announcement.

“We are committed to working closely with our federal and state partners to achieve an effective cleanup, while ensuring that all our affected communities have a voice in the process as this moves forward,” the statement said.

Times Union

<http://www.timesunion.com/local/article/Hoosick-Falls-declared-federal-Superfund-site-9207653.php>

Hoosick Falls declared proposed federal Superfund site

By Brendan Lyons 9/7/16 1:45pm

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Wednesday designated contaminated areas in the village of Hoosick Falls as a proposed federal Superfund site.

The declaration would allow federal resources to be used to help clean up areas in the village contaminated with a man-made chemical that polluted public and private water supplies. The Superfund designation also means the federal government will simultaneously seek reimbursement and assistance from any companies found responsible for the pollution.

The federal Superfund listing comes after New York officials earlier this year said the Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics plant in the village of Hoosick Falls would become a state Superfund site. The designation allowed the state to list perfluorooctanoic acid or PFOA, a toxic chemical that has been found in elevated levels in the village's water supply, as a hazardous substance.

"The people of Hoosick Falls need all hands on deck -- and especially the EPA's Superfund status -- to hold accountable the corporations who created this PFOA mess and force them to clean up the pollution," U.S. Sen. Charles E. Schumer, D-New York. "I am glad that EPA has heeded our call to add this site to the National Priority List right away, because it gives the EPA leverage to make the polluters pay and to set a protocol for investigation and clean-up. This will help the people of the Village of Hoosick Falls and the Town of Hoosick."

Superfund authority allows the state to investigate the extent of any contamination, and to begin remediation immediately. But the federal Superfund declaration elevates the government response to the situation, including the weight of a federal cleanup program that has been in place for more than 30 years and led to cleanups of severely polluted sites around the country.

Elevated levels of PFOA were found in the village's water system in 2014 by Michael Hickey, a former village trustee whose father died of cancer. Hickey sent water samples to a Canadian lab that reported levels of PFOA that the EPA later said are not safe for human consumption.

The EPA in 2009 established a guideline that a level of 400 parts per trillion is a safe level for "short-term" consumption of the water. But the EPA this summer set a lifetime exposure level of 70 ppt for the chemical. PFOA has been discovered in drinking water in the Hoosick Falls and Petersburg areas at levels above 500 ppt.

PFOA is a man-made chemical used to make non-stick and other household and commercial products that are heat-resistant and repel grease and water. Under a deal with the EPA, major PFOA makers began phasing out its use in 2006. PFOA exposure has been linked to increased health effects, including testicular and kidney cancer and thyroid disease.

Dr. Marcus E. Martinez, who runs a family medical practice in Hoosick Falls, told the Times Union last year that he and his father, who opened the practice in 1956, have noted rare and aggressive forms of cancer in patients, as well as thyroid disease and other health problems. In December, the Times Union reported many residents in the village and town believe their community has been afflicted by rare and aggressive forms of cancer and thyroid disease.

State officials previously said their Superfund designation "exists to enable the DEC to go out and spend money against the state Superfund remedial work. We then go after the polluter to recover those monies."

Although the source of the Hoosick Falls contamination has not been identified, officials have focused on the Saint-Gobain plant, which is near several wells that supply Hoosick Falls' water treatment plant. The small factory, which Saint-Gobain bought in 1999, used the chemical for decades and is the village's largest employer with about 125 workers.

The firm owns a second plant in the village with about 75 workers.

Saint-Gobain used PFOA at its plants until December 2014, when it stopped using the chemical. Its own water tests, done as a result of Hickey's discovery, included results that showed levels of PFOA at 18,000 ppt in the groundwater under its McCaffrey Street plant — several hundred yards from the village's well fields.

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Please let me know if you'd like to be de-looped from this distro list, or want someone added.

Below: Flathead Beacon, Silverton Standard

Flathead Beacon

<http://flatheadbeacon.com/2016/09/07/epa-declares-cfac-superfund-site/>

Columbia Falls Aluminum Company Site Declared a Superfund Site

By Dillon Tabish on 09/07/16 at 11:20am

The Environmental Protection Agency is designating the Columbia Falls Aluminum Company property a Superfund site.

The agency announced Wednesday morning that the CFAC property will be added to the Superfund program's National Priorities List, ensuring long-term remedial cleanup through the federal program. The EPA adds sites to the NPL when mismanagement of contamination threatens public health and the environment, the agency stated in its announcement.

"The addition of the Columbia Falls Aluminum Company site to the National Priorities List will ensure the comprehensive investigation and cleanup of contaminants and help secure future opportunities for the reuse of this prominent property along the Flathead River," said Shaun McGrath, EPA Region 8 Administrator. "EPA's action is based on a thorough review of site data and input from the local community."

The Superfund designation marks a new chapter for the former aluminum plant on the banks of the Flathead River at the gateway to Glacier National Park.

The CFAC plant operated between 1955 and 2009 and created significant quantities of spent potliner material, a federally listed hazardous waste, as a byproduct of the aluminum smelting process. Spent potliner material is known to contain cyanide compounds that can leach into groundwater. Other contaminants of potential concern at the site include various metals, organic compounds, hydrocarbons, polychlorinated biphenyl compounds, and pesticides.

The potential Superfund listing has been a polarizing topic in a community grappling with how to clean up the 960-acre industrial site that has sat idle for nearly seven years northeast of town. Tests have detected contaminants, such as cyanide and fluoride, and metals, such as arsenic, chromium, lead, and selenium at the site.

"I think this is the way that we will at least ensure that it's cleaned up," Mike Shepard, a

Columbia Falls city councilor and former employee at CFAC, said. “At least now we have a direction, and that’s what we’ve been waiting for for almost seven years.”

The Columbia Falls Chamber of Commerce will be holding a public presentation about CFAC and the Superfund listing on Oct. 11, according to Executive Director Stacey Schnebel. The presentation will start at 12 p.m. at the Tea Kettle Community Room and is free and open to the public.

“The Chamber acknowledges that this has been in the works for quite sometime and it’s important to bring information about it to our members and our community,” she said.

EPA proposed the CFAC site for addition to the NPL on March 26, 2015. The EPA received 77 public comments on the proposed Superfund listing and a majority expressed support for the Superfund cleanup, according to public records of the submitted comments.

A year ago, Glencore, CFAC’s parent company and a global commodities trading and mining giant based in Switzerland, ended negotiations with the DEQ over how to proceed with assessing and cleaning up the contaminated site, spurring the most outspoken support for Superfund. In November, the firm reached an agreement to launch a \$4 million remedial investigation into the full scope of contamination. The investigation process is expected to take four to five years, starting with initial surveying in April followed by the drilling of 43 sampling wells from May through September, according to CFAC officials. Groundwater sampling began this fall.

When completed, the investigation will detail the nature and extent of contamination, identify potential risks to human health and the environment, and inform any necessary cleanup requirements and alternatives.

This story will be updated.

Silverton Standard

<http://www.silvertonstandard.com/news.php?id=920>

Breaking News: Superfund To Be Official On Friday

By Mark Esper on 09/07/16 at 1:24pm

EPA announces designation of Bonita Peak Mining District site

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will add the Bonita Peak Mining District (BPMD) site in San Juan County, Colo., to the National Priorities List (NPL) of Superfund sites on September 9, 2016. Superfund is the federal program that investigates and cleans up the most complex, uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites to protect public health and the environment.

“Listing the Bonita Peak Mining District on the National Priorities List is an important step that enables EPA to secure the necessary resources to investigate and address contamination concerns of San Juan and La Plata Counties, as well as other downstream communities in New Mexico, Utah, and the Navajo Nation,” said Shaun McGrath, EPA’s Regional Administrator. “We look forward to continuing our efforts with the State of Colorado, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S Forest Service, Tribal governments, and our community partners to address the impacts of acid mine drainage on the Animas River.”

EPA proposed the BPMD site for addition to the NPL on April 7, 2016, and conducted a 68-day public comment period on the proposal. After reviewing and responding to all comments in a responsiveness summary, EPA has added the site to the NPL. The responsiveness summary can be found here: <https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=EPA-HQ-OLEM-2016-01522>

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